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PROMPTLY AND NEATLY EXECUTED.

POETRY.

[From the Gem of the Prairie.]

GOD BLESS THE HONEST LABORER,

BY FRANK WEBBER.

God bless the honest laborer,

The hardy son of toil.

The worker in the clattering mill,

The deliver in the soil.

The one whose brow has been torn

From earth her hoarded wealth.

Whose sole return for ceaseless toil

Is nature's boon—sweet health.

Bless him who wields the broad-iron sled,

Clad in his leather mail.

That safe as warrior's plow,

Churns from the seedling soil.

That gushes from beneath each stroke.

Each mighty crashing blow,

Who seeks to lighten labor's toil

Where ruddy fire glows.

Bless him who turns the matted soil:

Who with the early dawn

Hastes to gather nature's store—

Haste to the yellow corn!

Who plants in nature's bosom wide

The fruitful golden grain.

And gives it to her guardian care,

The sunshine and the rain.

Bless him who lays the massive keel,

Who bends the sturdy rail

That bids the ocean wanderer

Safely battle with the gale:

Who rears the tall and slender mast

Whence flags to every breeze

The stars and stripes of liberty.

As rainbow o'er the seas.

Bless him whose ribbed pulley rests

Upon the heaving sea.

Who rears the derrick at the wharf,

The breaker grand and stern:

Who in the ocean's bosom wide

Calms in deep fathom

Unfolding their hoar and hoar

Before the tempest's power.

Bless him who gives each laborer thought

A resting place, a name,

And gives it to his heart's desire

With the humblest wreath of thyme.

Who sends it forth on every breeze,

And bids it live to him.

While each child of the laborer's toil

And grows the nation's pride.

Bless him who builds the sturdy pier

On which with steady power

Whose hoarse voice the sea's deep thrum

In every day's hour.

Bless them though poor and lowly they be

What wealth can ever gain.

Contentment, with the heart's desire

A laborer's joy.

Bless them, and every worker's hand

That builds the nation's pride.

That bids each child of the laborer's toil

And grows the nation's pride.

Receive on high a resting place

Within the realm of life.

For every honest son of toil.

When peace shall be the dark and bright.

death-bed of some peasant neighbor who need

ed ghostly consolation at his hand

As he was thus thinking, two strangers en-

tered the room wrapped in light-colored cloaks;

one of them advanced politely towards him.

"Sir," said he, "you must immediately ac-

company us. You must celebrate a marriage;

the bride and groom are already waiting for you

in the distant church. This sum of money," said

he, showing the old man a purse full of gold,

"will sufficiently recompense you for your

trouble and from the terror of so unexpected a

summons."

The old man stared, silently and horrified at

the strange figures which seemed to him to have

something fearful, nay, specter-like, in their ap-

pearance. The stranger repeated his errand

pressingly and beseechingly.

When the old man had somewhat collected

himself, he began mildly to remonstrate and to

represent to the stranger that his office did not

permit him to perform such solemn rites with-

out knowledge of the parties, or without those

preparatory formalities which the law required.

With that the other stranger stepped forward,

"Sir," said he, in an imperative tone, "you

have your choice; follow us and receive the re-

ward, or remain here—but in that case a bullet

will pass through your head;" and with these

words he drew forth a pistol which he held to

his forehead, and thus waited for his answer.

The old preacher turned pale, and without

saying a word, rose up in terror dressed him-

self quickly, and then said, "I am ready."

The two strangers had spoken in the Danish

tongue, but so as to leave no doubt of their

being foreigners. They walked silently on through

the night-stillness of the village, and the preach-

er followed them. It was a perfectly dark au-

umn night, for the moon had by this time set.

When they had passed through the village the

old man, speechless from terror and surprise,

saw that the church was lighted up; and his at-

tendants wrapped in their white cloaks, walked

on without speaking and rapid steps through

the dark, sandy plain, whilst he wearily and

thoughtfully followed after. When they had

reached the church a halcyon was fastened over

his eyes. He heard the side door, with which

he was well acquainted, opened gratefully on

its hinges, and he felt himself thrust in, by

force, amid a great crowd of people. He heard

a murmur through the whole church, and in

his immediate neighborhood a language spoken

which was totally unknown to him. He imag-

ined it to be Russ. He stood with his head

pressed on all sides by the throng, helpless

and in great perplexity, when all at once he was

seized upon by a hand and drawn forward with

force through the crowd. At length as it ap-

peared to him the throng of people, with love,

and the halcyon was removed from his eyes.

He recognized one of his late attendants, and

found him standing before the altar. A row of

immense burning tapers in magnificent silver

chandeliers illuminated the altar; the church

was so brilliantly illuminated by many

lights that the most distant object was discerni-

ble, and as he saw a few women seated, when his

eye reached the murmur of the dense crowd

through which he was thrust was fearful to him.

He saw the awful silence of the same

place fill his terrified soul with horror. Al-

though the side door and the hinges were closed,

excepted by him, still the middle aisle was pre-

sently empty, and the preacher saw before him

nothing but a vast, empty space.

The crowd which had hitherto

seemed to him to be a solid mass of people, now

appeared to him as a thin, airy, and insubstan-

tial mist. He saw a few women seated, when his

eye reached the murmur of the dense crowd

through which he was thrust was fearful to him.

He saw the awful silence of the same

place fill his terrified soul with horror. Al-

though the side door and the hinges were closed,

excepted by him, still the middle aisle was pre-

sently empty, and the preacher saw before him

nothing but a vast, empty space.

Behind the bridegroom stood a man of gigantic

size and with a dark aspect, who looked straight

before him with a grave and immovable expres-

sion.

The preacher paralyzed by horror, remained

silent for some time, till a wild glance from the

bridegroom admonished him to commence the

ceremony. That which increased his perplex-

ity still more was the uncertainty as to whether

the bride pair understood his language; he

thought it probable that they did not. He how-

ever, collected himself and made the attempt by

inquiring from the bridegroom his own and the

name of his bride, "Neander and Feodora," re-

plied he, in a stern voice.

The preacher now commenced to read the

marriage formula, whilst his voice faltered, and

he lost himself so frequently that he was obliged

to repeat the words, yet still neither of the

bride pair appeared to notice his bewilderment,

so that his conjecture that they were not fully

acquainted with the language became only the

more confirmed. When he asked therefore,

"Wilt thou, Neander, acknowledge as thy law-

fully wedded wife, Feodora, who kneels here at

my side?" he doubted whether the bridegroom

clearly understood, would reply; but to his

astonishment, he replied, "Yes," in a fearful-

ly, yelling tone, which seemed to ring through

the whole church. Deep sighs which proceeded

from the attending crowd accompanied that

horrible "yes," and a silent shudder, like light-

ning flash, agitated the deathly pale features of

the bride. He then turned himself round, and

as if he would awaken the bride from her death-

ly stupor, asked in a loud voice, "If thou, Feo-

dora, wilt acknowledge as thy lawfully wedded

husband, Neander, who kneels beside thee, then

reply by an audible 'Yes'?"

With that the almost dead bride seemed to

arouse herself; a deep sorrow agitated her re-

laxed features; the pale lips moved, a quickly

flashing fire seemed to kindle in her glance; her

breast heaved, a violent flood of tears extin-

guished the flashing light of her eyes, and the

"yes," which she uttered was like a cry of an-

guish from the dying, and seemed to find a deep

echo in the involuntary tone of pity which burst

from the breast of the crowd. The bride sank

backward into the arms of the old woman.

Several minutes passed in fearful silence, and

then the preacher saw the corpse-like bride

travelling again in deep unconsciousness, and

the ceremony was ended. The bridegroom

arose and led the faltering bride to her former

place; the old woman and the gigantic man fol-

lowed.

The two men who had brought the preacher

latter, again appeared, bowed his eyes, and

pushed him out without difficulty, through the

crowd, and after they had put him out of the

door he heard it closed in the inside, and he was

left to himself. Here he stood for a moment at-

lone and uncertain whether the awful circum-

stances, with all its secret-like, might not be

all a dream. But when he had turned his head

from his eyes and saw the illuminated

church before him, and heard the murmuring of

the crowd within, he was convinced that this

mysterious affair was all a reality. In order to

ascertain as much as possible of the matter, he

remained concealed in a corner of the

church and on the side opposite to that which he

entered, and as he had listened, he perceived

that the tumult within became every moment

more violent. It seemed to him that a combat

took place, and he seemed to hear the sharp

voice of the bridegroom imperiously command-

ing silence. A long pause then succeeded, a

shot was fired, the cry of a female voice was

heard; again succeeded a pause; then a sound

as of men at work with tools which he recog-

nized as a quarter of an hour. The lights were ex-

tinguished, the tumult again arose, and the whole

throng poured out of the church and hurried

rapidly down to the sea.

The preacher now arose and hastened to his

own village, where he arrived there he saw

his neighbors and friends to tell him, that

the man was of middle height, broad should-

ers, and of a firm build; his step was haughty;

with almost youthful impatience did the aged

man himself descend into the vault, others fol-

lowed him; the lid of the coffin was raised, and

the old man saw that his suspicions were verified.

In the coffin lay the murdered bride. The mag-

nificent diadem was gone from her head. The

ball had penetrated her heart. The expression

of deep sorrow was gone from her counten-

ance, a heavenly peace had glorified the beau-

tiful face, and she lay there like an angel. The

old man wept aloud, and threw himself on his

knees by the coffin, praying for the murdered

lady; and silent astonishment fell upon all those

who were with him.

The preacher considered it to be his duty in-

stantly, and without any disguise, to make known

this occurrence to the Bishop of Zealand as his

spiritual head, and until he had received an an-

swer from Copenhagen on the subject he requir-

ed his friends on their oath to keep all profound-

ly secret. The vault was again closed, and no

man dared to speak on the subject. Suddenly

a respectable man made his appearance from

the capital, he made strict inquiry after all that

had occurred; he required to be shown the grave;

commanded the silence which had been observ-

ed on the subject, and sternly insisting that the

circumstances should remain a secret, and threat-

ened any one who ventured to speak of it with

the severest punishment.

After the death of the preacher it was found

that he had given a narrative of this strange oc-

currence in the register belonging to the church.

Some persons believe that it had in some way a

mythical connection with the rapid and violent

change of dynasty which took place after the

